

Records show that on June 26, 1995, Jennifer O'Connor forwarded the Minnesota Democratic delegation letter to Sibbison at Interior and requested that Sibbison draft a response. The following day, June 27, Sibbison faxed a memorandum back to O'Connor with two draft responses. The first response to the Democratic members of the Minnesota delegation stated that DOI was reviewing the matter. The second response stated that DOI had denied the Hudson casino proposal, which Sibbison's cover memo said "may be made public later this week." Sibbison noted that Ickes could wait and then write that the application had been denied – the result for which the delegation had been pressing – when the decision was made public.³³¹

In both of the draft letters, Sibbison suggested that Ickes say in the first person, "I have contacted the Department of the Interior." Moreover, in the draft letter stating that Interior was reviewing the application but had not yet made a decision, Sibbison proposed the following statement by Ickes:

I have contacted the Department of the Interior and have been assured that the Department is aware of the concerns you articulated in your letter. I also understand that similar concerns were expressed in a meeting between members of the Minnesota delegation and Department of the Interior officials.

Sibbison's drafts stated that Ickes contacted DOI, not simply that his staff had done so. Even if this phrasing simply reflects literary license in referring to staff contacts, one draft indicated that Ickes had "been assured" that DOI was "aware" of the Democratic members' "concerns" about

³³¹In the memo, Sibbison encouraged O'Connor to call her for any further assistance, and stated that she would notify O'Connor "as soon as the final decision has been announced."